

OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Luchia Stefanova Antonova-Vasileva –

Institute for Bulgarian Language at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

for the procedure for acquiring the educational and scientific degree

"Doctor of Science"

in a scientific field in the field of higher education

2. Humanities, professional direction 2.1. Philology

with a dissertation on:

"BULGARIAN LANGUAGE SOUTH OF THE EQUATOR

(SOCIAL LINGUISTIC STUDY

**IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE BULGARIAN EMIGRANT
COMMUNITY**

IN THE CITY OF SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA)",

presented by Katya Grozeva Issa, a free doctoral student at the

Faculty of Slavic Philology at the University of Sofia "St. Kliment Ohridski"

I. Evaluation of the qualities of the dissertation text

The presented for discussion work is dedicated to an important issue for modern Bulgarian linguistics – the language of the Bulgarian emigrants. In doing so, the object of study is the most geographically remote and understudied expatriate community in Sydney, Australia.

Characteristic of this work is not so much the aspiration to exhaust the previous literature on the issue, as the critical attitude towards it and especially towards the current practices of teaching the Bulgarian language and the educational literature on which it is carried out.

In the introduction, K. Issa formulates as his main goal to propose a methodology for tracking changes in the native language of Bulgarian emigrants around the world in a theoretical aspect. She uses the main sociolinguistic methods to study the urban speech situation with the idea of provoking Bulgarian linguistics for similar studies everywhere in the

world where Bulgarians live. In this way, scientific work acquires not only scientific, but also important social importance. In relation to the social significance of the work, there are also the analyzes that K. Issa makes about the state of the native language of Bulgarians who emigrated abroad, and the processes of changes to which it is subjected – see Chapter 1. **THE POLICY OF BULGARIA TOWARDS OUR EMIGRANTS TODAY AND THE POLICY OF EMIGRANTS TOWARDS BULGARIA TODAY.** In this part of the work, the evaluation of the influence of the political situation on the Bulgarian language of emigration – not only in the process of communication, but also in the process of learning – can be defined as the main focus of the observations. Here, the need for a wide application of the cultural aspect in the teaching of the Bulgarian language is emphasized; the consistent teaching and learning of the language not only as a sign system serving for communication and knowledge, but also as a cultural code. Katya Issa defines the condition of identification as a condition of crucial importance for the preservation of the language. The group of Bulgarians who maintain their Bulgarian language, guided by these motives, stands for the acronym – ABV. This is not a single group in social, professional or other respects, but it is the group of those who define themselves as Bulgarians. Its most contrasting feature is the age, which divides the informants into three subgroups – respectively: A – young, the alphabet children; B – bilinguals (middle generation); C – adults.

The work successfully applies the different methods of field research – including observation, conducting surveys and interviews, implementation of "secret recordings". Representative excerpts from "probes" – "snippets of idiolect" are also used, which allow to compare typical samples of the language behavior of all 80 studied persons, which illustrate the speech diversity in the language of the Bulgarians of Sidney.

The method of included observation is applied for the first time to the Bulgarian language outside the state borders and south of the equator. The observations of the linguistic behavior of the three generations of Bulgarians are very productive.

The credibility of the work contributes to the orientation of linguistic observations on different units and spheres of communication – **THE MODERN BULGARIAN URBAN LANGUAGE SITUATION IN THE CITY OF SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA; THE LANGUAGE OF BULGARIAN FAMILIES IN SYDNEY; THE BULGARIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL.** These studies occupy a central place in Chapter 2. **THE BULGARIAN LANGUAGE IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA.**

The published samples from language observation, surveys and interviews present reliable factual linguistic material that allows conclusions to be drawn about linguistic phenomena at different levels – phonetic, grammatical, syntactic, lexical, etc. in Chapter 3. **FIELD STUDY OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE BULGARIAN COMMUNITY IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE ENVIRONMENT OF SYDNEY.** Through the conclusions from the linguistic observations, the author proves her theses about the linguistic processes in the speech of the Bulgarian emigration.

In terms of style and language, the text is original and impactful, often even with a journalistic color and force, which corresponds to the public importance of the research. The text of the abstract corresponds to the text of the dissertation.

II. Contributions of the dissertation research

In the dissertation, clearly contributing moments are outlined in the application of the sociolinguistic methods of urban speech research. In the abstract, they are formulated in 10 main points, which corresponds to the text of the dissertation. First of all, the fact that the language situation among the Bulgarian community in Sydney, Australia is systematically studied for the first time in sociolinguistic terms.

The proposed streamlined system of monitoring and researching the teaching and use of the language can serve as a basis for similar scientific research anywhere in the world where Bulgarian emigrants live.

It is characteristic of the work that contributions have a solid potential for practical effect – e.g. the presented idea for a renewed modern methodology of learning the Bulgarian language by Bulgarians abroad as second-born, whose teaching differs significantly from the teaching of foreign languages and the Bulgarian language as a foreign language in Bulgaria. In my opinion, this idea has good potential for implementation.

In the dissertation, a number of terms from the conceptual apparatus of classical sociolinguistics are redefined, laying the foundations of a new angle for scientific observation and research in Bulgarian linguistics – sociolinguistic research of the language of emigration or, as the author defines it, "emigrantology".

In the spirit of sociolinguistic research with emphasis on the social conditions in which the language functions, the proposed "three pillars of sustainability" (the family, the school and the state language policy in relation to emigrants), around which the Bulgarian roots can be wrapped and well well-thought-out strategy and general efforts to extend the life of our native language with a healthy "torsion stiffness".

III. Publications and participation in scientific forums

From the attached reference for scientometric indicators, it can be seen that the candidate fully meets the requirements for publication and scientific activity, necessary for awarding the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences".

IV. Conclusion

In conclusion, I can definitely confirm that Assoc. Prof. Dr. Katya Grozeva Issa presented for the award of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" an original scientific work with significant scientific contributions, which is of great importance for Bulgarian society and performed at a high scientific level. Based on this, I unequivocally express the opinion that she fully deserves to be awarded the title of "Doctor of Science".

Date: 15. 08. 2023.

Sofia

Author of the opinion:

(Prof. Dr. Luchia Antonova-Vasileva)

